



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement in Response to the Statement by Chairman in Office Dr. Dimitrij Rupel

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the 13th OSCE Ministerial Council, Ljubljana
December 6, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I go to my statement on another matter, I want to thank you on behalf of the United States for a hugely constructive two days. You mentioned in your remarks that we were aiming high. One of the great hallmarks of this organization is that it continues to aim high. When it stops aiming high, then we really need to worry about it. But it is, in my opinion, thanks to your leadership for these past two days, that this organization is in a very, very healthy situation. To sit here with 55 nations discussing and wrestling with multiple and diverse issues has been – from a personal standpoint – an extraordinarily moving experience for me.

The United States thanks Slovenia for these past two days and definitely thanks Slovenia very much for its Chairmanship this last year. We look forward, with increasing enthusiasm, to the Chairmanship in 2006 from Belgium, as we have worked together these past two days more and more. So thank you, and thank you, colleagues, for all your understanding and for the very wise decisions and thought you have put into the work we have all gone through over these past two days.

Mr. Chairman. The United States regrets that it has not been possible to reach agreement on a Ministerial Political Declaration, or on a regional statement on Moldova.

In light of the lack of progress in regard to efforts to resolve the Transnistrian conflict and to complete the withdrawal of Russian Federation forces from Moldova, the United States holds the view that it would have been highly appropriate in a Ministerial Declaration and regional statement to have:

Reiterated our support for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova;

Reiterated OSCE willingness to support a political settlement acceptable to all the people of Moldova;

Welcomed the expanded format of the political settlement negotiation process which now includes the participation of observers from the European Union and the United States, and which we hope will give an added impetus to the process to find a sustainable model for a comprehensive settlement that will define a special legal status for the Transnistrian region within the Republic of Moldova;

Welcomed the initiatives of the President of Ukraine and the complementary efforts of the Republic of Moldova to advance the negotiation process;

Noted with great concern the unilateral actions taken by local Transnistrian authorities against the population in the Security Zone by restricting access to land and demanded the restoration of freedom of movement;

Welcomed the deployment by the European Union of a Border Assistance Mission, and hoped that it will enhance transparency and combat negative phenomena on the Moldovan-Ukrainian border;

Noted the progress in negotiations on possible monitoring of military-industrial enterprises in the Transnistrian region, and taken note of the package of confidence- and security-building measures presented by the mediators to the conflict negotiation in July 2005.

And, of course, Mr. Chairman, it would have been of the utmost importance for a Ministerial Declaration and regional statement to have regretted the lack of progress in 2005 on fulfillment of the 1999 Istanbul Summit commitment on the withdrawal of Russian Federation military forces from the Republic of Moldova and urged its prompt resumption and completion.

Thank you. I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.